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77 MONTEVIDEO 5161

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ACTION ARA-14
INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DFA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INF-07 I-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 AID-05 NFA-10 /081 W
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EXCISE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY T. Mari DATE 5/7
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5167
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MONTEVIDEO 5161
E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM
SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS: RABBI ROSENTHAL'S VISIT TO URUGUAY
REF: STATE 242489
1. SUMMARY: RABBI MORTON ROSENTHAL, LATIN AMERICAN DIRECTOR OF THE ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE (ADL) RECENTLY MADE A VERY SUCCESSFUL THREE-DAY VISIT TO URUGUAY WHICH EMBASSY BELIEVES CONTRIBUTED TO OUR HUMAN RIGHTS EFFORTS HERE. SPECIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF ROSENTHAL VISIT WERE (1) A FRANK EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES WITH HIGH-LEVEL GOU CIVILIAN OFFICIALS AND THREE MILITARY COMMANDERS IN CHIEF (2) A BETTER UNDERSTANDING BY ROSENTHAL OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN URUGUAY WHICH HE CAN SHARE WITH OTHERS IN U.S. CONCERNED WITH THE PROBLEM; (3) A JOINT MEETING OF LOCAL JEWISH COMMUNITY LEADERS AND U.S. AND ISRAELI AMBASSADORS AND THEIR TOP STAFF WITH ROSENTHAL TO DISCUSS PROBLEMS OF THE COMMUNITY AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION AND (4) AN EXCELLENT AND VERY EDUCATIONAL ROSENTHAL BRIEFING OF MISSION STAFF ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE ACTIVITIES OF
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PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS IN THIS FIELD. END SUMMARY.
2. RABBI MORTON ROSENTHAL, ADL DIRECTOR FOR LATIN AMERICA, VISITED URUGUAY OCTOBER 16-20. ROSENTHAL, A FLUENT SPANISH SPEAKER, AND A WELL INFORMED AND HIGHLY ARTICULATE ADVOCATE OF AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS AND POLICIES HAD AN EXCELLENT VISIT WHICH WE BELIEVE CONTRIBUTED TO OUR HUMAN RIGHTS EFFORTS HERE.
3. DURING A 45-MINUTE MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ROVIRA, ROSENTHAL EXPLAINED SPECIFIC CONCERN OF ADL TO COMBAT ANTI-SEMITISM STATING THAT THIS WAS NOT CONSIDERED A PROBLEM IN URUGUAY. THE ADL HAD RECEIVED ONLY A FEW ISOLATED COMPLAINTS OF MISTREATMENT OF JEWISH PRISONERS WHERE ANTI-SEMITISM WAS SUSPECTED, BUT WAS REASONABLY SATISFIED THAT THIS WAS THE WORK OF LOW LEVEL OFFICIALS WHICH WAS NOT CONDONED AT HIGHER LEVELS. ROVIRA, A FORMER

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CASES, REMAINED SILENT DURING A DISCUSSION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF OTHER GOVERNMENTS, URGING THE GOU TO MAKE POSITIVE HUMAN RIGHTS IMPROVEMENTS, BUT HE MAY HAVE GOTTEN THE MESSAGE. (COMMENT: THE OCCASION WAS AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO ESTABLISH LINKS AMONG THOSE PRESENT AND TO DISCUSS PROBLEMS OF MUTUAL CONCERN. END COMMENT.)

7. ROSENTHAL ALSO MET FOR ALMOST TWO HOURS WITH A LARGE GROUP OF MISSION STAFF FROM ALL AGENCIES. HE GAVE AN EXCELLENT BRIEFING ON THE ACTIVITIES AND CONCERNS OF THE ADL AND OTHER PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS FIELD AND ANSWERED NUMEROUS QUESTIONS.

8. COMMENT: COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL ASPECTS OF THE VISIT HAVE BEEN NOTED ABOVE. IN SUM, ROSENTHAL'S VISIT WAS A DECIDED PLUS FOR US AND CONTRIBUTED IN MANY WAYS TO OUR OVERALL HUMAN RIGHTS EFFORTS IN URUGUAY. WE WOULD WELCOME A RETURN VISIT IN THE FUTURE AND RECOMMEND THAT OTHER POSTS, CONFIDENTIAL

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ESPECIALLY THOSE IN THE SOUTHERN CONE, CONSIDER TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THIS EFFECTIVE AND ARTICULATE RESOURCE PERSON.

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
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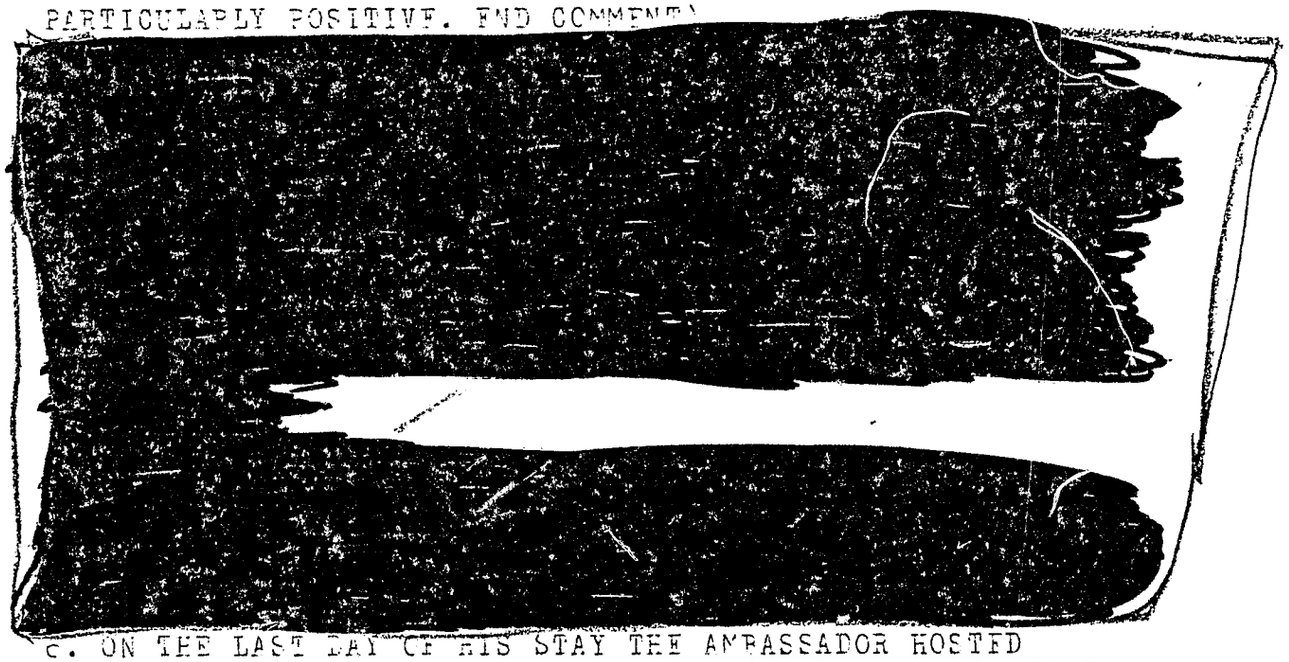
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MONTEVIDEO 5161
RECENT ACTIONS AGAINST THE NEWSPAPER EL DIA AS ABSOLUTELY
NECESSARY SINCE THE HONOR OF THE ARMED FORCES HAD BEEN
OFFENDED. (COMMENT: IN SUM, WE BELIEVE THIS RARE TURNOUT
OF ALL THREE CINC'S TO RECEIVE A NON-OFFICIAL VISITOR WAS
USEFUL. IT ENABLED THEM TO HEAR OUR HUMAN RIGHTS MESSAGE
FROM A PRIVATE AMERICAN CITIZEN AND FORCED THEM TO DEFEND
SOME OF THEIR ACTIONS. RABBI ROSENTHAL ALSO VIEWED GENERAL
VADORA'S INVITATION TO URUGUAYAN RABBIS TO VISIT PRISONERS AS
PARTICULARLY POSITIVE. END COMMENT.)



C. ON THE LAST DAY OF HIS STAY THE AMBASSADOR HOSTED
A LUNCHEON FOR ROSENTHAL WHICH BROUGHT TOGETHER THE FIVE
KEY LEADERS OF THE LOCAL JEWISH COMMUNITY WITH THE ISRAELI
AMBASSADOR AND DCM AND OUR DCM AND POL. OFFICERS. THE
JEWISH LEADERS SOMEWHAT GUARDEDLY GAVE THEIR VIEW OF THE
URUGUAYAN SITUATION, OBSERVING THAT THERE WAS NO APPARENT
ANTI-SEMITISM HERE AND THAT THEY HOPED THIS WOULD CONTINUE
TO BE THE CASE. THE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR, WHOSE HUMAN RIGHTS
APPROACHES HAVE LARGELY BEEN LIMITED TO ISRAELI CITIZENS

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SITUATION IN URUGUAY SUCH AS THE CLOSURE OF CONGRESS, THE
STRIPPING OF THE JUDICIARY'S INDEPENDENCE, THE CENSORSHIP
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OF THE PRESS, THE SUSPENSION OF HABEAS CORPUS AND NUMEROUS
REPORTS OF MISTREATMENT OF PRISONERS. THIS SPARKED A
VIGOROUS DENIAL THAT THE JUDICIARY WAS NO LONGER INDEPENDENT
BECAUSE THE ACTIONS TAKEN WERE MERELY ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS
AND THE CHANGE FROM A "SUPREME COURT" TO A "COURT OF JUSTICE"
WAS ONE OF NAME ONLY. ADMIRAL MARQUEZ ALSO DEFENDED THE
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AMBASSADOR TO ISRAEL, ASSURED ROSENTHAL THAT THE GOU STRONGLY CONDEMNED ANTI-SEMITISM AND WOULD PUNISH ANY OFFICIAL GUILY OF SUCH ACTS, WHICH SHOULD BE IMMEDIATELY BROUGHT TO THE GOU'S ATTENTION. ROSENTHAL THEN MOVED TO THE CONCERN OF THE ADL, OTHER PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC IN GENERAL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN URUGUAY, EXPRESSING THEIR HOPE FOR POSITIVE ACTIONS TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION. ROVIRA RESPONDED RATHER NEGATIVELY WITH THE FAMILIAR GOU LINE. URUGUAY HAD FACED A MAJOR TERRORIST-SUBVERSIVE ASSAULT DURING THE TUPAMARO PERIOD WHICH FORCED IT TO TAKE DRASTIC MEASURES TO PROTECT ITSELF. THE THREAT CONTINUED AS DID SOME OF THE MEASURES BUT THE GOU HOPED TO RETURN TO NORMALCY AS SOON AS CONDITIONS PERMITTED. UNFORTUNATELY THE U.S. AND OTHER TRADITIONAL FRIENDS DID NOT UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THIS AND WERE MISINFORMED BY A MASSIVE

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COMMUNIST-TERRORIST-SUBVERSIVE PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN AGAINST URUGUAY WHICH THE GOU LACKED THE RESOURCES TO COMBAT. THERE WERE NO "POLITICAL PRISONERS" IN URUGUAY BECAUSE ALL PERSONS WERE DETAINED FOR COMMON CRIMES. WHEN ROSENTHAL QUESTIONED THE ASSURANCE OF NO POLITICAL PRISONERS A LONG AND NOT VERY FRUITFUL DISCUSSION ENSUED DURING WHICH ROVIRA ARGUED LEGALISTICALLY THAT NATIONAL SECURITY OFFENSES WERE COMMON CRIMES. (COMMENT: ALTHOUGH NEITHER PARTY SIGNIFICANTLY TFE VIEWS OF THE OTHER THE DISCUSSION WAS CORDIAL AND FRANK AND WE BELIEVE ROVIRA DID GAIN AN IMPRESSION OF THE DEEP CONCERN AND ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF OF PRIVATE ENTITIES SUCH AS THE ADL IN HUMAN RIGHTS. END COMMENT)

4. IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE MEETING WITH ROVIRA, ROSENTHAL, ACCOMPANIED BY THE DCM AND ACTING DAO, MET FOR ONE HOUR WITH ARMY CINC VADORA, AIR FORCE CINC PALADINI, NAVY CINC MARQUEZ AND JOINT STAFF (ESMACC) CHIEF SANGURGO. ALTHOUGH THE MEETING COVERED MUCH THE SAME SUBSTANCE AS WITH ROVIRA, THE DISCUSSION WAS MORE ANIMATED (BUT CORDIAL) AND ALL THREE CINC'S ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED. THE CINC'S REITERATED THE GOU'S STRONG OPPOSITION TO ANY ANTI-SEMITISM AND THEIR DISBELIEF THAT ANY GOU OFFICIAL WOULD COMMIT ANTI-SEMITIC ACTS. WHEN ROSENTHAL NOTED THAT LOCAL RABBIS DID NOT VISIT JEWISH PRISONERS, GEN. VADORA EXPRESSED SURPRISE, TELLING ROSENTHAL THAT RABBIS HAD AN OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE MORAL SUPPORT TO THEIR FOLLOWERS AS DID THE CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT CLERGY AND STRONGLY URGED THEM TO VISIT ALL JEWISH PRISONERS. ROSENTHAL PROMISED TO PASS THIS MESSAGE TO THE RABBIS, AND SUBSEQUENTLY DID. WHEN GENERAL PALADINI CHARGED THAT U.S. CONGRESSMEN PUSHING PUNITIVE LEGISLATION AGAINST URUGUAY WERE EITHER PAID BY THE COMMUNISTS OR DUPED BY THEIR PROPAGANDA, THE DCM INTERVENED TO DENY THIS. THE DCM SAID CONGRESSMEN BASED THEIR ACTIONS ON THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF THE FACTS OF THE

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